II. The Cave After The Flood

The flood had ended

but the world was not at peace.

The seas still steamed with fever

and the land moved

like a body in pain.

The earth had swallowed too much

cities,

altars,

bones,

and memory —

now

it began to vomit.

volcanoes coughed smoke

and ash into the sky,

and rivers bled from the cracks

like wounds reopening.

Beasts stumbled through the fog,

their roars trembling

in the hollow air.

and Noah

was gone

buried with his soul at rest.

Three brothers watched the horizon break,

a vast family gathered within the cave.

Japheth packed stones and led his own family away.

he said:

“The earth still cracks

even after the flood? ”.

“I’m done waiting.

i’m done staying at the farm

we need to hunt

i’m going to build shelter

that never falls

Come—let’s go.”

And so it was

another city had been imagined

among Noah’s family

Canaan dug into the soil

and clung to a nest of food.

he took Noah’s old tools

claimed the farm and said

“The earth is rich—and ours,”

he said.

“It belongs to the First born

Ham

and no other

“Don’t you touch what rightfully belong to us.”

And the first fields were fenced

among Noah’s family

Shem looked upward,

hands empty,

heart steady.

“The Lord who saved us with the ark

will guide us still.

Come my sons

let us go”

And from that cave

the world divided—

builders,

keepers,

and children

each walking his own way

through the trembling earth.